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Application Serial No. 09/921,401
Reply to Office Action of November 1, 2006

PATENT
Docket: CU-2612

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action dated November 1, 2006, the Examiner states that Claims 1-5, 9-20, 23-27, 35 and 36 pending and Claims 1-5, 9-20, 23-27, 35 and 36 are rejected.

In the Office Action, the title is objected to for not being descriptive. The Applicant has amended the title to read as "IMAGE PRINTING SYSTEM FOR OUTPUTTING A DIGITAL IMAGE". If this title is not acceptable, the Applicant would welcome any suggested titles.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Cook (US 6,786,655). The Applicant respectfully disagrees with and traverses this rejection.

The Office Action, at pages 23-24, indicates that "Applicant argues that since the prior art issues a bar code decided by the kiosk, the identification of the customer is difficult if the customer loses the receipt. The Cook reference discloses that the private information of the customer is capable to be done by the system since the user has to only insert the card to be identified (See Col., 5, Line 9-14). Thus, the kiosk system stores the customer information within it in order to identify the customer whenever issuing the receipt note as well as to identify the customer prior to outputting the collation sheet."

However, at Col. 5, Line 9-14 in Cook, it is disclosed that "In the preferred embodiment, the payment system 112 comprises a card reader 112a. The card reader 112a accepts payment cards, such as a smart card or a card containing an encoded magnetic strip. The card reader 112a preferably allows credit cards, debit cards, and prepaid cards to be used by the customer to pay for services at the self-service film processing system 100."

In Cook, the card reader is merely disclosed as a part of the payment system, and there is no description and no idea for using the card reader as the customer information inputting means. As previously argued, the disclosure in Cook is only that the system is equipped with a card reader in order that the user can pay with a credit card. Generally, the information read by the card reader, such as card number, etc., should be treated as confidential information for use only for payment

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by the credit card company, and thus, it is hardly considered that the printing system itself retains the card information in order to use it for another purpose such as printing an articles receipt confirmation. Further, Cook does not disclose or suggest to issue the receipt note having customer Identity information which includes the private information input at the private Information inputting unit, and to issue the collation sheet which has the customer identity information which includes the private information input at the private information inputting means.

Next, the Office Action, at pages 23-24, indicates that "Applicant also argues that it is possible to receive the printed article with a clerk's help. Cook discloses that ability to be handed the stored printed images either now when the transaction is completed right away (See Col.8, Line 41-44) or later when the images are locked by a cashier. This allows a user to complete the transaction with the cashier and be handed the printed image once the process is completed (See Col. 5, Line 35-37)."

However, the Applicant has not argued or claimed that "it is possible to receive the printed article **with** a clerk's help". The Applicant has indicated that "it is possible to receive the printed article **without** a clerk's help", even when the user wants to receive the printed articles at a later time. The subject matter of Claim 9 has a storage means which stores the printed article therein, which is locked and unlocked with a certification information input by a customer. Cook does not disclose such a storage means.

Third, the Office Action, at pages 23-24, indicates that "Applicant argues that the prior art does not disclose being able to lock and unlock the printed articles with the certification information Inputted by the customer. Thus, the prior art of Mardon is used in combination in order to meet the limitations of amended claims."

Although Mardon (US 5,126,732) discloses a certain locker system, there is no reasonable motivation for combining Cook's system with the Mardon locker system. In Cook there is no description or suggestion about any locker system, and in Mardon there is no description or suggestion about adapting his locker system to an image printing system or kiosk system.

As the Office Action pointed out, Cook discloses an Image print service system (kiosk) which has as printers a local printer and a remote printer which are connected to a main body that accepts various inputting means such as processing negative film, a scanner, storage media and a digital camera. However, Cook fails to disclose the private information inputting means and the receipt note issuing means

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which issues a receipt note having customer identity information which includes the input of private information, as well as the collation sheet printing means provided to the back yard printing part which issues the collation sheet having customer identity information which includes the input private information. Thus, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) by Cook regarding Claims 1-5 is considered overcome, and should be withdrawn.

Further, the kiosk of Cook issues a receipt that has a unique bar code which allows the customer to pay and receive the printed image at a given time.

Although the receipt having the unique bar code of Cook will be used for identifying the customer similar with the receipt and collation sheet according to this invention, the bar code will be automatically decided by the kiosk. Therefore, if the customer loses the receipt, the identification of the customer is not possible. In the present invention, since the receipt and the collation sheet have customer identity information which includes the input private information, the identification of the customer is possible even if a receipt is lost. Therefore, the receipt and collation sheet using the input private information has a clear and advantageous difference over Cook's receipt using a bar code.

Although the rejection indicates that Cook shows a private information inputting unit which is the payment system such as a card reader, Cook only discloses and intends that the card reader is for the payment system. There is no suggestion or teaching for using the card reader for a private information inputting unit. It is clear that the receipt of Cook is a bar code which has no relation to the information read by the card reader, and the information read by the card reader should be treated as confidential information to be used only for payment by the credit card company. Thus, it cannot be considered that the printing system itself possesses the card information in order to use it for another purpose such as printing an articles receipt confirmation.

Thus, the Applicant also considers that the subject matter of Claim 1 is not obvious from Cook.

Since Claims 2-5, 20, 23-27 and 35-36 are dependent claims of Claim 1, they are also not considered anticipated by or obvious from Cook. Further, the other cited references, Nardozzi (US 6,636,837), Vance (US 6,131,874), Minamishin (US 6,516,468), Morba (US 6,381,033), Otsuki (US 6,692,096), and Wright (US 3,831,478) fail to disclose or suggest issuing a receipt note having customer identity

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information which includes private information input at the private information inputting unit, and to issue the collation sheet which has the customer identity information which includes the private information input at the private information inputting means. Thus, each of these dependent claims are also not considered obvious from any combinations of the cited references.

In the Office Action, Independent Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cook in view of Mardon. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with and traverses this rejection.

As the rejection points out, Cook does not disclose storing and locking the stored printed article using the certification information so that it is possible to be opened whenever the certification information is inputted in order to open the locked storage unit.

Although Mardon discloses a certain storage unit, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention by Applicant to include a storage unit such as the one disclosed by Mardon and incorporate it into the image printing system of Cook.

The rejection indicates the reason for this combination: "if a user does not have the correct amount to pay for the printed images, or if a user wishes to pay for them at a later time period, a storage unit allows a user to store the printed images for an undisclosed amount of time". This reason is not disclosed or suggested in either Cook or Mardon, and has merely been fabricated as a reason within the Office Action. There is no motivation for combining Mardon's storage unit with Cook's printing system. There is a great difference in technical fields between the printing system as disclosed in Cook and the storage unit as disclosed in Mardon. Cook does not have any description or suggestion about any locker system, and Mardon does not have any description or suggestion about adapting the locker system to an image printing system or kiosk system. As such, these systems may not be simply combined and the combination considered obvious.

Thus, Claim 9 is not considered obvious from the combination of Cook and Mardon, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Since Claims 10-19, 20, 23-27 are dependent on Claim 9, they are also not considered obvious in view of Cook and Mardon. Further, the other cited references, Nardoizzi, Vance, Minamishin, Morba, Otsuki, and Wright, fail to disclose or suggest

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a storage unit in a printing system. Thus, these dependent claims are not considered obvious from any combination of the cited references.

In light of the foregoing response, all of the outstanding objections and rejections are considered overcome. Applicant respectfully submits that this application should now be in condition for allowance and respectfully requests favorable consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: May 1, 2007



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